

THE

# HISTORIAN

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OF HANCOCK COUNTY

*Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi*

September 1996

## SEPTEMBER HAPPENING

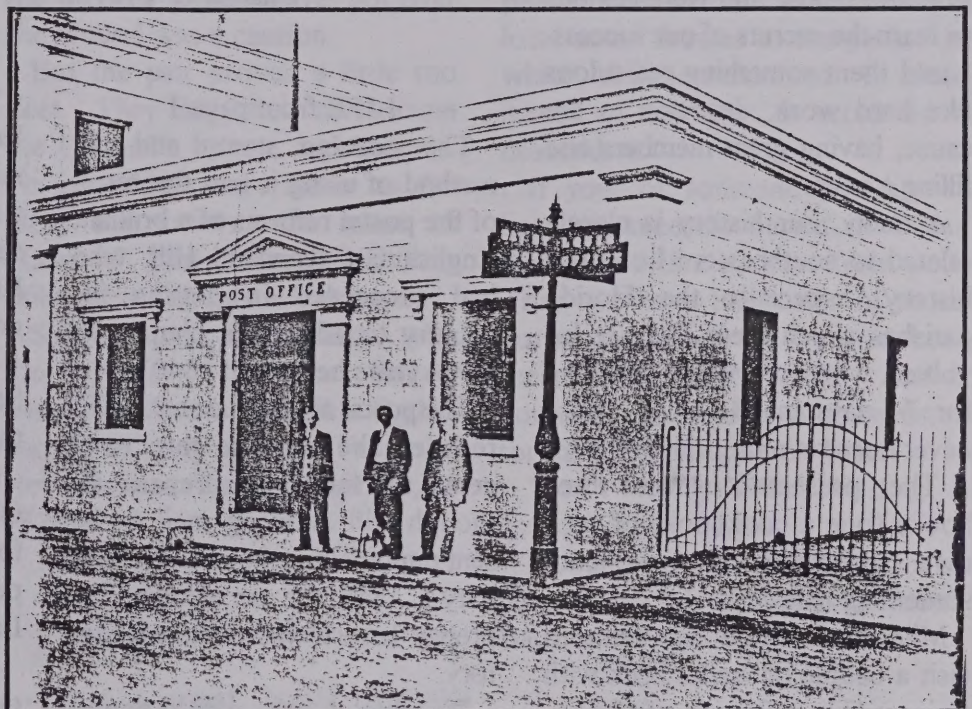
The next monthly meeting of the Hancock County Historical Society will be held at the Loblano House at noon on Thursday, September 19th. Our guest speaker will be Letitia Galbraith, who has served as Executive Director of the Walter Anderson Museum.

Ms. Galbraith will discuss both the museum and the works of Walter Anderson. Lunch, at \$5, will be served as usual but reservations are absolutely necessary. We are trying to keep the price as low as possible. Please telephone 467-4090 before noon on Wednesday, the day before the luncheon, and leave a message with Karen, Charles or Stupid Machine.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thanks to our new office equipment, we have been able to expand **THE HISTORIAN** from four to eight pages which allows for our new Bulletin Board, some commercial advertisements and the Supporters page which will help defray the newsletter cost.

We have received great news from the Hancock County Board of Supervisors: our request for financial help for our 1997 budget year (Continued on page 2)



THE UNITED STATES POST OFFICE IN BAY SAINT LOUIS, LOCATED ON MAIN STREET BEHIND THE HANCOCK BANK DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

## LIFE BEFORE FAX AND INTERNET

On July 1, 1847, the United States government issued its first postage stamps.

These stamps, the 5 cent Franklin and the 10 cent Washington, marked the beginning of the modern era in mail handling.

At this time, the sender of a letter could send it by pre-paying the postage or by sending it collect. A complicated system of rates for

various distances together with the custom of charging by the sheet made the handling of the mail a slow and tedious task. It was no wonder that the post office was always jammed with people because it took a long time to wait on each one.

More letters came collect than were prepaid, a custom that was vexatious, not to say expensive, to the receiver.

(Continued on page 2)



**PRESIDENT** from page 1 has been granted. This will enable us to continue our five-day-a-week operation. Thank you, members of the Board of Supervisors.

I addressed the St. Tammany Historical Society on August 24th in Slidell. Their president and three board members had visited Lobrano House and were anxious to learn the secrets of our success. I told them something ridiculous like hard work, devotion to the cause, having great members and filling a need.

Actually, our history is closely related to southeastern Louisiana history, especially the Florida parishes which were likewise involved when we were revolting for 74 days in 1810. We have never been revolting since.

They presented us with three books (one a cookbook) of their own publication. Can we learn something here?

Mildred Otis Fountain came to visit a couple of weeks back with an incredible collection of 67 photographs of old Logtown. She allowed us to have copies made of them and to share them with the Sea Coast Echo, which is running one in nearly each issue with a credit line to us and to Mrs. Fountain. Thank you Mildred.

Lightning struck twice! Mr. and Mrs. Freeman Davis of Picayune came calling and presented us with 47 photographs of old Gainesville. We have copied and enlarged an old map of the city and the Davises are helping us arrange the photographs in proper order on the map.

And then lightening struck

thrice. A secret donor let the Gulf Coast Photo Center by Jitney Jungle copy a number of great local photographs for us. Whoever you are, thank you.

Society member, Dan Ellis, has written a very interesting and informative book, "Diamondhead Jubilee". Let us know if you have trouble finding a copy.

Charles H. Gray

### **LIFE** from page 1

The postage stamp and the method of using it was the result of the postal reforms of a brilliant Englishman, Rowland Hill, who had succeeded in getting his country to adopt the plan some seven years before (in 1840).

The postal act of March 3, 1851 reduced the postage rate to 3 cents on letters if prepaid although still allowing mail to be sent unprepaid at 5 cents. By January 1, 1856, the use of stamps to prepay letters was made mandatory.

Postal telegraphy was in operation in Bay Saint Louis in 1893 after poles and wires were installed.

The first postmaster in the Bay was John B. Toulme, with the office located on the pier of the old Crescent Hotel, over the water at land's edge. It remained there until 1882, when Toulme was succeeded by Edith Ross and the post office was moved to her home at the corner of Second and State Streets.

The next post office was under Mrs. Annie E. Avery, noted journalist who, together with her sister, Josie Welch, ran a news

stand/novelty store in which the post office was located, on Union Street on property that later belonged to St. Stanislaus College.

Mrs. Avery served as postmistress for 10 years, from 1885 to 1895, and is buried in Cedar Rest Cemetery..

Edith Back

### **A RETREAT FOR NEW ORLEANIANS**

We can take any of the boats that leave daily the wharf at the end of the railroad and shortly after partaking of a splended dinner on board find ourselves at the wharf of the venerable Bay St. Louis, which long ere this great city was founded or thought of - - when Chartres, Royal and Canal Streets were the undisturbed home of the frog, the alligator and the snake - - was a respectable shipping town of Old France, whence boats departed for the French settlements on the Upper Mississippi, passing through Lakes Maurepas and Manchack.

It is now a great summer resort of our citizens, who have many little cottages here, protected and overshadowed by fine old oaks. A very pleasant residence it is, indeed, for families with good bathing, abundance of fish and fruit, and of very convenient distance from the city for business people who cannot be away long.

There is a very comfortable Hotel at the Bay, kept by a courteous and agreeable gentleman, fat Mr. Lovis, who spares no trouble to render his visitors comfortable.

This musing from the *Daily Delta*, New Orleans, Llouisiaana, Friday, July 18, 1851, was one of a number promoting the Coast.



**MAGIC AT THE POST OFFICE**

A tender legend exists about the third tree east from the night mail box in front of the post office at the Bay Waveland line. Here it is:

Many moons ago a Choctaw brave named Chaffi who lived along the Chickasawhay River near Hiwanni wooed the beautiful maiden, Tuculo. They were to be married but an enemy tribe who lived near the Father of Waters attacked their village.

Chaffi bravely pursued the retreating warriors along the old Indian trail (now called the Old Spanish Trail) that ran through present-day Hancock County. He finally engaged them in battle and was slain at the very place where now grows a large oak tree.

Tuculo waited a long time, watching continuously for the return of her lover. Finally, she went in search of him and followed the trail left by the retreating warriors as it wound across the coast. When she came to the spot where Chaffi had died, she saw the great oak. It leaned across her path and in its trunk was formed a doorway in the exact shape of the one in the high chief's teepee back at Hiwanni.

As she passed the opening, she heard the voice of Chaffi calling her. She followed his voice and stepped through the opening into the Happy Hunting Ground and the arms of her beloved Chaffi.

Indian lovers still leave gifts to the gods before the opening in the tree and believe that they too will someday step through the opening and will be forever in the Happy Hunting Ground.

**BUGGY RACE**

We were the other evening a witness of an exciting contest on our shell road between the two fastest teams in Bay Saint Louis.

Col. R. M. Ogden had been dared by the splended Fortier team (a pair of high-mettle chestnuts) to keep up with them on an even start, and the way the gallant sorrel got over the ground was a caution.

But the pair proved a little too fleet. They fairly flew away from the Colonel's buggy, and Mrs. C. Fortier added more luster to the glory that crowns the name of "Corrine" [the famous Civil War sailing ship] already at the Bay.

She occupied the carriage, with the old servant Miles as driver, when the hitherto invincible Ogden sorrel was fairly beaten. (From the New Orleans Times, Sept. 28, 1878.)

**A PLACE OF ART V**

It is a great honor for the Historical Society, along with the City of Bay Saint, to co-sponsor the fifth annual exhibition and sale given by A Place of Art V on October 5 & 6, 1996. It will be held at Our Lady of the Gulf Community Center in Bay Saint Louis. Admission is both free and easy with ample parking on the premisses.

**LOBRANO HOUSE HOURS**

MONDAY	8 a.m.
through	to
FRIDAY	4 p.m.

**HALLOWEEN CEMETERY TOUR**

As we prepare for this year's Halloween tour of Cedar Rest Cemetery, we are seeking new characters and solicit your help.

The guided tour, by now a local tradition, takes visitors through the cemetery, stopping at selected graves to hear the story of the person interred there, portrayed by a local actor dressed in the period in which the deceased lived. In some instances, the part is acted by a descendant.

If you, or someone you know, have an ancestor buried in Cedar Rest, we'd like to hear from you. True, we have the roster of those buried there, but we want to hear their stories FROM YOU. And if you'd like to portray your ancestor for the tour, so much the better.

Don't worry about writing a script. That's our job.

If you have information or want to be an actor on Halloween, call Edith Back at 467-4090 or 467-2445.

**THE****HISTORIAN**

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Publisher  
Editor

Charles H. Gray  
Edith Back

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SOCIETY

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Telephone/Fax [601] 467-4090  
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SEPTEMBER 1996

# BULLETIN BOARD

## CEDAR REST CEMETERY TOUR

Next month on Thursday, October 31 is the annual Cedar Rest Cemetery Tour. We need the following:

- Tour guides
- Characters
- Hostesses for the Lobrano House
- Donations of Treat candy
- Donations of real pumpkins & gourds
- Volunteers to help decorate Lobrano House

Please call Karen Flores at 467-4090 to sign up. This event is a lot of fun for everyone.



## BUSINESS CARD ADS

We are taking orders for business card ads in the monthly newsletter. **THE HISTORIAN** is mailed to 500+ members each month. To have your business listed, please send us your check for \$10.00 for the remainder of 1996 and your business card. This is an excellent source of inexpensive advertising.

Please call Karen Flores at 467-4090 for more info.

## COMPUTER CLASSES

We will be offering computer classes for beginners here at Kate Lobrano House. Harry Wheat of PC Experts will be teaching the classes. Times and dates to be determined. There will be a small fee to cover cost of materials. Call 467-4090 if you're interested.

## AMTRAK TRAIN TRIP

We're doing it again! Join us on Monday, September 23 for an encore excursion to New Orleans on the Gulf Coast Limited. The cost is \$20 for round trip train fare. The Flamingo Casino is providing round trip bus rides from the Depot to Riverwalk. Space is limited, so call us at 467-4090 to make your reservations.

September 29th is the last scheduled run for the Limited. Don't miss your chance to ride the train and support the Historical Society.

## LUNCHEON RESERVATIONS

DUE TO INCREASED ATTENDANCE AT OUR MONTHLY LUNCHEON MEETINGS, WE ARE NOW REQUIRING RESERVATIONS TO BE MADE NO LATER THAN NOON ON THE WEDNESDAY BEFORE THE MEETING. IF YOU WISH TO HAVE LUNCH WITH US, YOU WILL NEED TO CALL 467-4090 BEFORE NOON ON WEDNESDAY. YOU MAY STILL ATTEND THE MEETING WITHOUT A LUNCHEON RESERVATION, BUT WE WON'T BE ABLE TO SERVE YOU.



SEPTEMBER 1996

# BULLETIN BOARD

## LOBRANO EXCHANGE

Office/Dorm-size refrigerator for sale  
\$50.00 Phone 467-4090

Wanted: Punch Cups for the Historical Society. We need to increase our collection before our Christmas Party. Look for them at the next garage sale you attend.

## ORAL INTERVIEW PROGRAM

Anyone interested in joining our program of oral interviews of senior citizens and other interesting people in Hancock County, please call the Historical Society office at 467-4090.

## NOTICE OF APPRECIATION

Late word has just arrived that the City of Bay Saint Louis has approved our request for funding for 1997!



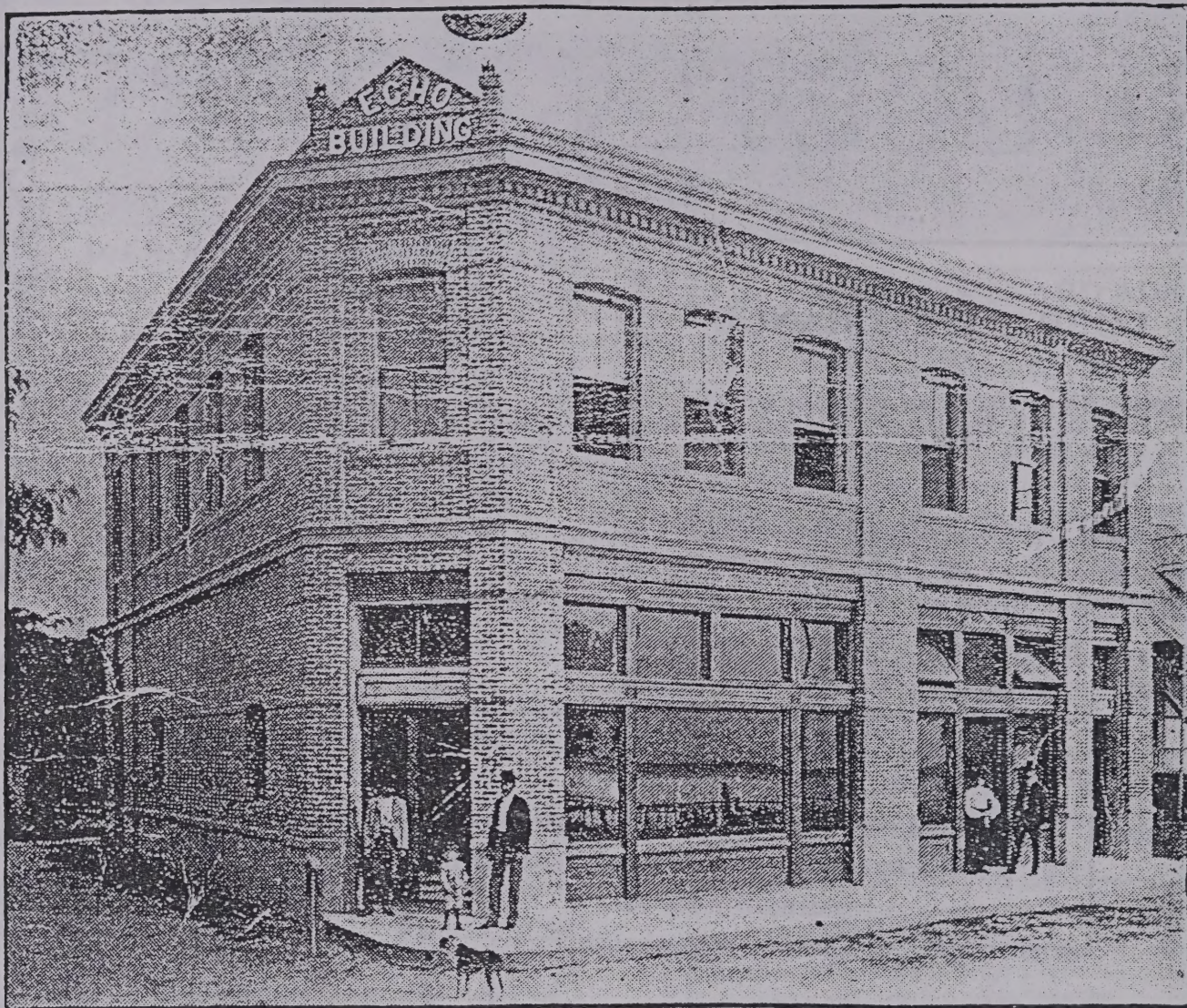
## NEW COURSE AT GULF PARK COLLEGE

Society President Charles Gray has been appointed as instructor to present a five-hour course entitled "History and Natural Treasures of the Mississippi Gulf Coast: 1699-1899" at Gulf Park Conference Center, Long Beach

The non-credit course will meet from 11 a.m. until noon October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31. The Fee is \$30.

**Look under  
your bed  
Search your  
attic  
Scare up  
some  
Halloween  
decorations  
for the  
Lobrano  
House**





### NEW HOME OF THE SEA COAST ECHO.

The old "Sea Coast Echo building" located on North Beach Boulevard at State Street is number 36 on the National Register of Historic Places: "1903 with later applied stucco cladding. 2-story 6x5 bay brick building clad with stucco. Cantered corner entrance. Denticulated cornice. Inset tiles below cornice. Some recent alterations including 2-story balcony". (This building is rated as "contributory" due to its alterations).

The site was purchased on November 3, 1902 from C. C. Hartwell. The building was designed by John Henry of New Orleans who designed the Godchaux building located on Canal Street at Chartres Street. It was built by Gaston G. Gardebled and was completed in 1903.

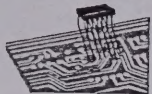
At the time of its completion, it was the new home of the Sea Coast Echo newspaper on the ground floor and housed the Cumberland Telephone Company on the second floor.



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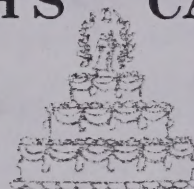
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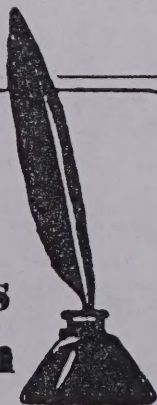
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